



THE GOSSIP TREE

News & Views from the Parish of FONTMELL MAGNA

JULY
2022
Issue 340

*This edition of the Gossip Tree was kindly sponsored by
The Fontmell Magna & District Garden Club*

Sponsoring the Gossip Tree

The Gossip Tree (GT) reaches over 200 households in Fontmell Magna parish and further afield. It's really helpful that the majority of issues are delivered electronically but because that is not convenient for all readers some paper editions are available too. These are delivered to more vulnerable residents or left in the post office for people to pick up.

The GT team were delighted to be able to help with funding for the Jubilee flyer and two temporary toilets for the Jubilee street party this summer. Now there is a need for sponsorship of GT paper copies until the end of this year, and beyond.

If you have a special occasion in August, September, October, November or December and would like it mentioned or are feeling particularly community-minded your financial support of the newsletter would be warmly welcomed. The charge is £30 for an edition which covers the cost of paper copies and allows the editor to produce an occasional special paper issue such as a children's Chimes or maybe a resurrected Directory.

Sponsors usually write a few words or a paragraph which will be featured in the heading or on the first page or they can remain anonymous.

Please consider if you can help us carry on making the GT accessible to all and if you would like more details contact

Barbara Humphreys blueletterbox@btinternet.com



Hello from St Andrew's where we are celebrating our movement **OUT OF SPECIAL MEASURES!** Following the inspection late in April 2022. We are delighted to be on the 'up' and rapidly building on our strong foundations. The last year has been a roller coaster

for all involved but we are delighted to have had the hard work recognised and to be looking to a brighter future for all who attend here. Keri, at The Alfred Daily, caught up with me last week to talk about it, if you'd like to listen to the interview you can do so here <https://thisisalfred.com/community/tears-of-joy-as-ofsted-says-fontmells-primary-is-no-longer-in-special-measures/>

This is the term where everyone asks us 'are you winding down for the summer holidays?' when in actual fact things ramp up significantly with trips, visits, residentials, events, church services, music concerts, new family evenings, assessments and reports as well as the usual day to day business of school life! It is all good fun but boy are we ready for the break when it comes around ...

We also say farewell to our lovely Year 6's who move onto secondary school; a wonderful group of young people who we will sorely miss. Here's to new beginnings and new adventures and days in the sun

All the best, Debbie Brown and all at St Andrew's Fontmell



Notices – July 2022

St. Andrew's Church - Services for July

3rd 1100 Special benefice service on generosity
10th 0930 Morning worship
17th 0930 Holy Communion with choir
24th 0930 Morning worship
31st 1000 Benefice service at Shroton

Parish Council Meeting

Next PC meeting
Wed 20th July 2022 in the village hall at 1930

Parish clerk: Sam Smith
clerk@fontmellmagnapc.co.uk

Local Councillor—Jane Somper

Email: cllrjane.somper@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk
Tel: 07710 395359

Village Shop & Post Office

Normal opening hours:
Mon - Fri 9.00am - 5.30pm
Sat 9.00am - 1.00pm
Sun 9.00am - 11.00am
Enquiries: 811201

Cafe 9-4 Monday to Friday and 9-12 Saturday
garden cafe from May - October

A2 licence for home-cooked meals, all day
breakfast, jackets toasties etc

The Tea Room Crafters

2nd and 4th Wednesday of the month at 2.30pm
in the Tea Room.

Enquiries: Jenny White 812042

The Fontmell—opening hours

Mon to Friday—12-11pm food served 12-2.30 & 6-9pm
Saturday 12-11pm, food served 12-3pm & 6-9pm
Sunday 12-6, food served 12-4pm

Enquiries: 811441 or john@thefontmell.com

St. Andrew's School

Enquiries: 811500

Fontmell Magna Toddler Group & Under 5s

Enquiries: 812773

Iwerne Valley Walking Group

Next walk will take place on Saturday July 16th,
please contact Helen English on the number
below for details

Contact: Helen English 01747 853472

Bell-ringing

Enquiries: Caroline Rhodes 812002

Events in the Village Hall

Fontmell Friendship Garden—Pop up Café

Resumed 20th April 2022
Contact Sian Highnam 811028 or
garden.fmvh@mail.com

Fontmell Magna & District Society

1st Friday of the month, October to May from 7.30pm.
Enquiries: Dick Stainer 811153

Sunday Breakfast

1st Sunday of the month
Enquiries: Barry Roberts 811906

Fontmell Films

Enquires: Libby Gendall 811551

Archive Society

3rd Thursday of each month in the village hall 4.00 to 5.30pm.
Enquiries: Roger Hillman 811878

Fontmell Magna & District Garden Club

See entry on page 6 about the Annual Show.

Enquiries: Sue Chippington 811520

sue.chippington@outlook.com

Fontmell Magna Art Club

Meetings weekly on Tuesdays between 2-4pm.
Enquiries: Sandra Jelbart 812468

Carpet Bowls Club

Thursdays 7.30-9.30pm
Enquiries: Gerry Bone 811814

Dru Yoga

Friday mornings at 0930 and 1100
Enquiries: Kirsty Elliot 829281
Kirsty@vhadevelopments.co.uk

Pilates

Mon 1730-1930 Tues 1000-1100.
STOTT Pilates Matwork with props Enquiries: Vicci Gillett 07940 961221 stablebodies@gmail.com

Pilates with Sam Whitford— Monday mornings term-time

Mondays 10.30 to 11.30am. Contact Sam Whitford 07740 906515 email: s.whitford@btinternet.com

Taekwon-do

Friday 5.30 to 6.30—suitable for adults and children from 6 years. Enquiries:
Sam Donohoo 07388 342625 or
sam.donohoo@hotmail.co.uk

Tennis court

Booking: Louise Murchie, 27 Orchard Close—
murchie25@btinternet.com Adults £1 per hour,
Children/Students 50p per hour

Aerobics

Thursday 1000-1100 Gentle/Low impact aerobics with Abby
Enquiries; Abby Down 01747 850867 07901 597129
zumbawithabby@gmail.com

To book the Hall, please contact :

Sian Highnam on 811028 or email bookings.fmvh@mail.com

Fontmell Magna Neighbourhood Plan - Moving Forward

November of this year marks the four year anniversary of our Neighbourhood Plan (FMNP) being approved by a parish referendum and now seems an appropriate time to reconsider the role it has undertaken.

The plan was brought together by a group of volunteers from the parish on behalf of the Parish Council. This working group brought a diverse range of skills and experience to the work of formulating the plan into what it represents today.

The aim of the plan was 'to set out how the parish should be developed over the period to 2031 to achieve a sustainable and thriving community, whilst retaining the distinctive character of the parish which is highly valued by residents and appreciated by visitors'.

Following the adoption of our Neighbourhood Plan in November 2018, an advisory group called the Neighbourhood Plan Monitoring Group (NPMG) was formed to carry out two major functions.

Planning

The group has to give consideration to all planning applications in respect of properties within the parish and to submit reports to the PC giving grounds for supporting or objecting to these applications and if appropriate identifying where the application conflicts with policies of the plan.

To date a total of 76 applications have been received and corresponding reports, together with appropriate recommendations submitted to the PC. The most significant planning application has been the Spring Meadows development currently under construction, where members of the group engaged with the developers at an early stage. By doing so they were able to not only ensure the number of houses were limited in line with the Neighbourhood Plan, but also influence housing styles, materials used and the general layout of the site. Vital financial contributions were secured towards parish projects and activities.

Legislation

Due to ever changing legislation it is necessary to monitor the factors which could affect the implementation of the plan and those policies contained within. Once identified these need to be brought to the attention of the Parish Council. This includes reviewing and recommending an update to the plan when necessary including such matters as housing needs assessment and incorporation of new national and county planning policies.

Moving Forward

Dorset county council is in the process of drawing up a new Local Plan, the draft of which is likely to be published in Spring 2023. This will have to be reviewed in light of new housing allocations and changes to policies such as renewable energies, etc.

To coincide with the new Local Plan it is felt that we need to prepare to review the Neighbourhood Plan and a **new group** should be established to perform this. With a number of new residents moving into the area it is hoped that some of them, together with any other interested party could come and join the group to ensure the revised Neighbourhood Plan reflects the needs and desires of the Parish. Should you wish to volunteer and become involved in planning the future of Fontmell village and parish please contact Robert McCurrach via email: robertmccurrach@aol.com

Roy King, Chair, Neighbourhood Plan Monitoring Group



Fontmell Magna Platinum Jubilee Celebrations



What a terrific day, a shame about the indifferent weather, but thank you so much to everyone who joined in the fun on Church Street, in the Churchyard and at the Village Hall Friendship Garden to make it a 70th Platinum Jubilee Street Party to remember.

Back in March Barry Roberts, Siân Highnam and Lisa Le Druillenec were keen to organise a Street Party to celebrate the Jubilee on Sunday 5th June. We cajoled a few others to join us, namely Sue Keen and Phyll Bennett and shared our ideas. We invited villagers to an Open Meeting at the Village Hall and from there our plan for a Big Jubilee Lunch was launched.

Sunday's Street Party was the culmination of many months of scheming, planning and developing ideas formulated at that meeting.

Although the setting up team were at it from early hours, the bells started the day with a joyous sound and one of the ringers had actually participated on Coronation Day in 1953, ringing the bells at one of the bombed London Churches, so many thanks Joseph and all the team for the bright start to the day.

At the special Jubilee service, the church distributed a book 'Our faithful Queen' commemorating 70 years of her faith and service as a memento of the day. Revd Garry Bennett led the service which was deeply moving with 5 readings from the Queen's broadcasts read by representatives of key village organisations. The service concluded with the National Anthem and a rendition of 'Crown Imperial' played by Ralph Kerr on the organ.

Prior to the day, Joy and her flower team arranged displays on every available stand and ledge in red, white and blue as their tribute to the Queen.



The pupils of St Andrews Primary School undertook some amazing works of art for the Jubilee and the church was delighted to display them over the Jubilee weekend and for the next two weeks. This has given the parents an opportunity to view the display. The exhibition was very much appreciated and there were many wonderful comments of praise. Well done, children!

Coffee and cake followed the service and children were able to come to the Craft Corner and make crowns, cloaks, flags, have tattoos and much more. We had a lovely busy time and about 20 children used their imagination to create some lovely items!

There was also a Treasure Hunt which was enjoyed by families.

Meanwhile, elsewhere in the churchyard the sound system was set up to play 1950s music for the next three hours – it was great to hear those old numbers and many were singing along once the Big Lunch was under way!

So thank you to all who contributed in all these areas which set the morning off to such a bright start and chased the clouds away till much later!

Following the excitement of the aerobatic flypast by Caroline Rhodes and her husband and with the weather turning decidedly chilly many retreated to the Village Hall for a warming cup of tea and cake and to admire the traditional Dorset folk dancing performed by Steps in Time. There was also a chance to have a final look round the Archive Society's exhibition on life in Fontmell in the 1950's.



It was decidedly damp but many braved the weather to admire the hard work put in by the Fontmell Friendship Garden volunteers, local children and Village Hall clubs who created a truly wonderful garden reflecting the colour themes of the Platinum Jubilee with inventive and creative planting and some additional humorous touches which we hope you spotted.



Fontmell Magna Platinum Jubilee Celebrations (cont.)

The organising team would like to acknowledge the work undertaken by Lisa who was a key player keeping us all together, even taking the event on holiday to Australia with her, from which she co-ordinated operations and volunteer duties from the beach then on her return she jumped off the plane into the key meeting just prior to the event. On the Saturday she could be spotted tarding up the loos with Amelia and at the Street Party she remained a point of contact for all and sundry, manning barriers and ensuring everything ticked along nicely.

Graham Eames secured us some great publicity in the Gossip Tree and organised the printing of the brochure in colour and thanks to Barry for designing it. Sue Keen and her Valley View delivery team really went the extra miles to deliver programmes to every household in the Parish, no mean feat, although possibly a few sore feet! And last, but not least, thanks to Siân for not only co-ordinating all the planting schemes for the clubs but also organising the afternoon teas at the Village Hall and taking the Pizza orders for the Pub.

However, it would not have been such a fabulous day without the enthusiasm and support of those who live in the Parish. It was lovely to see many of you from Bedchester and Hartgrove as well as those in the Village at the Street Party Lunch. Thank you for coming along and joining in the fun on Church Street.

There are so many we would like to thank for helping to make this day happen:

- The Parish Council for their support, the provision of Jubilee Mugs for the children of the Parish, and Andrew Davis for doing such a terrific job of the road closure, believe me, this was a tricky task!
- The Fontmell Pub for providing an excellent on Street Bar and Pizzas and Band later at the pub.
- Peter Keen and Barry Roberts for organising the Music.
- The Fontmell Village Shop and Tea Rooms for opening their doors for lunch.
- St. Andrew's School for the loan of tables and chairs and Jim, Jim, Jo and Tim for collecting these and others and returning them.
- Debbie Brown (Head Teacher) and Phyll Bennett for the Children's activities, Treasure Hunt and Art Exhibition in the Church.
- Siân Highnam and her Friendship Garden Team for organising the Jubilee Planting and the clubs and societies for designing and planting up their flower beds.
- The Friendship Garden Pop-up Café team, led by Siân who put on such a delicious afternoon tea – with many thanks to the cake makers of the Village who really rose to the occasion.
- The Gossip Tree for sponsoring the colour flyer and both event loos and John Ryall for hosting them.
- Roy Foster, our Lord Lieutenant of the Bunting, for sourcing the special jubilee bunting and organising the volunteers to ensure it was strung up around the village and taking it all down again!
- All the volunteers who helped on the day with the setting up and tearing down.
- The Ambouche catering team of Sue Keen, Susannah de Ferry Foster and their helpers who secretly prepared food on sticks as a surprise for on the day.
- All the stewards helping on the road closed barriers, luckily, we didn't have any emergencies, but we were prepared.
- Perry & Son Ltd who supplied sandbags and barriers
- Many thanks to everyone who loaned gazebos, Mike Humphreys, Robert McCurrach, Laura-Scott-Walby, Ian Warr. Thankfully the rain held off and thanks to everyone who helped put them up and take them down.
- Steps in Time for their performance at the Village Hall
- The Garden club for their stunning jubilee planting representing a silver crown with jewels and ermine.
- The Fontmell Under Fives for their Jubilee coloured bee friendly troughs.
- The Art club for their representation of the 25th, 50th and 70th Jubilee years planting in silver, gold and platinum, with the addition of corgis.
- The Carpet Bowls club for their planting of white pom pom dahlias and other spherical plants.
- Moviola for their "Film" bed in Jubilee colours.
- The Craft club incorporated an amazing, knitted queen, corgis and red arrows fly past into their jubilee bed.
- The Archive Society for their heritage sweet pea bed representing 70 years as well as providing a very interesting snapshot of the Village in the 1950's through their exhibition.
- St Andrews School young gardeners who have been busy planting sunflowers.
- Thanks also to the volunteers who grew the seeds and the volunteers who donated plants, watered and weeded along with the Claymore School and Yewstock volunteers
- The Tea Room crafters for knitting teddy bears for the Ukraine, the sale of which raised £83
- The Donation bucket shakers, especially Jennie Jones, for such a terrific on-street collection which raised more than £450.

Thanks to the generosity of all of you, **£536.58 was donated** to the Disasters Emergency Committee Ukraine Fund and with **Gift Aid** applied this rose to just over **£670**.

And thanks again to everyone else, not mentioned, who helped with this event.

The Fontmell Magna Platinum Jubilee Knee's Up Team.



Fontmell Magna Platinum Jubilee Celebrations (cont.)



WILLOW WEAVING WORKSHOP – MAKE AN ANIMAL (PIG) SCULPTURE

SATURDAY 17TH SEPTEMBER 2022 10AM – 4PM

FONTMELL MAGNA VILLAGE HALL, WEST STREET, FONTMELL MAGNA, nr SHAFTESBURY, DORSET, SP7 0JP



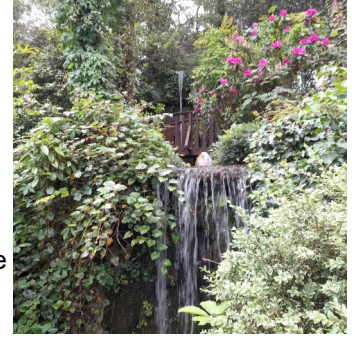
Your tutor, Kim Creswell Dip.Herb.Med. MNIMH, is internationally recognised for her sculpture work with willow of 30 years, & teaching for over 20 years. A fore-runner in the willow sculpture industry, Kim's work has featured in publications e.g. 'The Sunday Times Magazine', 'The English Garden', 'Green Parent', 'Garden Life' & the BBC's 'Garden Rescue' series. Examples of sculptures & hedgerow basketry can be found at www.kimcreswell.co.uk. Kim lives at & manages an off-grid, organically run small-holding & nature-reserve in Dorset. Kim is a practicing medical herbalist details can be seen www.goldberryherbs.co.uk

Using different coloured willow, grown, without the use of chemicals at Kim's small holding & nature reserve, you will make and take home a willow pig on it's own wooden stand. Using original techniques developed by Kim participants will learn willow weaving methods which are transferable to other willow sculptures.
Picture inserts courtesy of Kim Creswell

- To book a place contact Sue Morgan—susanheatley1@gmail.com
- Places restricted to 8 so tutor able to effectively facilitate
- Price £62 per person, payable in advance. Closing date 15th August, tools & materials provided
- If there are cancellations, places will be offered from a waiting list and if the event is cancelled, full refunds will be provided.
- Bring your own lunch and mug. Tea, coffee and squash will be available

Fontmell Magna & District Garden Club Summer Outing

Over 20 members from the Garden Club descended on Compton Acres in Poole on Thursday 9th June for their summer outing. Their marketing describes Compton Acres as 'The south's finest privately owned gardens... with a journey through 10 acres of themed gardens' and we were not disappointed. We had a tour with a very knowledgeable guide which lasted 90 minutes. We found out about the history dating back to the 1920s, how the garden has been refurbished over the years (and continues to have thousands of plants added) and that amazingly there are only 3 full time gardeners. We had a leisurely tour of the small separate gardens, taking in the Roman Courtyard Garden, the Grotto, the Grand Italian Garden, the Palm Court, the Sub-tropical Link, the Bog Garden, the Rock and Water Garden, the Sculpture Garden, the Heather Garden and finally the Japanese Garden. It is definitely a seasonal garden, so worth making a couple of visits a year when the camellias and rhododendrons are in bloom, when the heathers are out and the summer planting is at its best. No-one got lost, no-one was sick, no-one forgot their pocket money, there were no fights and we had no first aid incidents (always a good outcome from my days organising school trips) so it is fair to say that a good day was had by all. Sue Chippington



The Fontmell Magna and District Garden Club Annual Show. Saturday 6th August from 2.30pm

[The Fontmell Magna and District Garden Club are organising their Annual Show.](#) It will be held in Fontmell Magna Village Hall on Saturday 6th August 2022 from 2.30pm. Everyone is welcome to come along and see the displays. Teas will be served from 3.00pm and an auction of the produce from 4.00pm.

There will be the usual vegetable, fruit and flower categories for members to enter but plenty of opportunities for non-members to join in the fun. Two general sections are open to all villagers in the district, including the tastiest tomatoes, home-made jam and marmalade and a Fontmell 'Bake-off' (with the recipe for a courgette, lemon and thyme sponge cake).

The fun section, again, open to all villagers in the district, includes an arrangement in a beer glass, an animal made from fruit and/or vegetables, a miniature garden on a plate, a best dressed vegetable and an unusual or extraordinarily shaped vegetable.

There will also be two interactive tables; matching the seeds to the plants they will grow into and identifying mystery garden implements. There will also be a plant swap table.

You can pick up a copy of the programme and Entry Form from the village shop.

Gary Payne Memorial Bench

The trustees of the Middle Mill Dam Site charity would like to thank all the people who so generously contributed to our appeal for funds for a bench to be dedicated to the memory of Gary Payne.

We have now ordered a bench of a similar design to the existing bench which should be ready for installation around the end of July. This will be supplied by Richard Jesse of Sixpenny Forge in Sixpenny Handley.



This is a snapshot of a week in the life of the Fontmell Friendship Garden!

Saturday, June 11th we welcomed year ten students from Clayesmore School for a morning of volunteering. They helped weed, dead head, water and assembled jars of joy ready for flowers.

On Tuesday, all of year five from Clayesmore visited the garden and helped to get us ready for our visit on Wednesday. They put bunting up, arranged jars of joy and planted geraniums in pots.

On Wednesday, we welcomed our local councillor, Cllr Jane Somper and Chair of Dorset Council, Cllr Val Potheary. She had a chance to meet lots of people and tour the fantastic club beds. She was so so impressed with everyone and everything.

Thank you to everyone who came- who helped with teas, made cakes, set up, met Val and helped clear up and rang the church bells so beautifully. It was a really lovely afternoon - thank you so much.

On Friday, we welcomed a RHS assessor to the garden who came to visit us as part of the "In your neighbourhood scheme". If you are interested, pop on the RHS website and you can look at this category. The assessor was measuring us against three areas, with over 25 sub categories for assessment over all. Thank you to Sara Jane who completed all the application forms and arranged the visit. Sara Jane and I met the assessor yesterday and we had evidence of good practice against all the criteria. We will not have formal results until September. The assessor has taken away our evidence statements, alongside notes and photos of her own. Suffice to say she was very impressed and said we were eligible for higher categories of awards if we were ever interested. As soon as we have any news, we will share it immediately

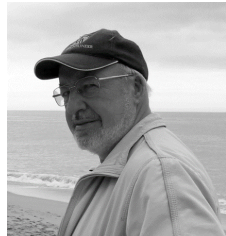
Councillor Chronicles No.10 - Reaching out to Parish Residents

**"Ask not what your Parish can do for you...
ask what you can do for your Parish."**

(With acknowledgement to John F Kennedy)



My wife Jacquie and I feel privileged to live in the beautiful and friendly village of Fontmell Magna. We moved to the village in February 2021 and although covid restrictions were still in-place, we were immediately made welcome (at a safe distance of course) by everybody we met. Many of you went out they way to introduce yourselves by first name. Who would not welcome a lovely ginger cake and useful village information delivered by Ann Hobbs. Jacquie and I quickly learnt about the numerous clubs, activities and events that are run by enthusiastic residents.



I retired from a long career in fleet engineering logistics working for major PLC's. Transport is in my blood having been born into a family haulage company, based in Gloucester. The last ten years of my career was spent with Carlsberg being responsible for its national fleet of vehicles. My hallmark was designing and introducing special vehicles, built to suit the roads and environments they operated in, trying to ensure their footprint (size), noise level and ergonomics of use found favour with our delivery crews and customers alike.

My introduction to the Parish Council was via Jeremy Long and Mike Humphreys, followed by a short sharp learning curve on how Parish Councils work along with the Dorset Council and Parish residents. At our AGM in May this year, I had the honour be elected Chairman of the Parish Council, taking over from Mike Humphreys.

So, what is the purpose of a Parish Council? Parish (and Town) councils are the first level of local government. They provide communities with a representative voice and a structure for taking community action. They play a vital part in representing the interests of local people and improving the quality of community life and the local environment. We are an Important link with our Ward Councillor, Jane Somper, who works tirelessly in support of our Parish.

However, we were and still are puzzled as to why so few people in the community are interested in being involved in the Parish Council. So how can the Parish Council reach out to residents? An excellent start has been made by our Vice-chair, Laura Kurton, by canvassing of all residents and recording the feedback. The good news is there are residents willing to assist in events and this will be followed up in the coming months. However, the juxtaposition of active volunteers versus shortage of Councillors to run the Parish Council still remains.

Key areas such as Environmental Protection and Community Reach (liaison with other local and County services and organisations) are currently not being covered by the Parish Council.

Adopting a press gang approach is probably going too far, but my colleagues and I on the Parish Council hope to demonstrate that with a few new members, we can deliver more for the benefit of all residents of the Parish of Fontmell Magna.

If you would like an informal friendly chat, please do give me a ring.

[Andrew Davis](#)

[Chair, Fontmell Magna Parish Council](#)
[07831 162446](#)

The D'Cruz Trio St Andrew's Parish Church

Fontmell Magna
SP7 0NY

Tuesday 19th July

7.30pm (Doors open 7.00pm)

Seats £10 registered in advance at Fontmell Village Shop

(£12 on the door) Further details - 07887 538468

Supporting Friends of Kilbride and St Andrew's Church



Piano: Caroline D'Cruz, Clarinet: Seymour Adams and Cello: Stephen Latham

Caroline D'Cruz - one of the regular organists at Fontmell and Ashmore brings her Trio to Fontmell for a concert containing well-known and not so well-known music for the less usual combination of Clarinet, Cello and Piano.

Beautiful music to enjoy at the height of the summer, starting with the well-known Beethoven Trio Op.38, followed by more recent music by Nino Rota who composed the music for the first two Godfather films. The second half features the hauntingly beautiful Faure Elégie for cello and piano and Debussy *Claire de Lune* from Suite Bergamasque. The performance concludes with music by the Danish composer Niels Gade, arranged by cellist Stephen Latham, adapting his String Trio for this concert tour's ensemble with clarinet.

The concert is in aid of a new loop system at St Andrew's Church, Fontmell and the restoration of Kilbride Church near Oban. Seat reservations (£10) via the Village Shop in Fontmell (£12 on the door). Refreshments available in the interval.

On the Shelf of the Friendship Garden Library

The Great Trees of Dorset by Andrew Pollard and Emma Brawn with the Dorset Wildlife Trust. This is not a gardening book unless intending to plant for posterity but it is a book on upright, contorted, bowed, hollowed, propped up, majestic trees to visit or even sit inside - see the Bulbarrow Yew.

"With names like Billy Wilkins, The Posy Tree (which no longer survives) and Judge Wyndham's Oak, Dorset's ancient trees are amongst its most precious treasures, as important as a part of our heritage as any architectural monument." (From the flyleaf).

At least two pre-date Christianity, one is the widest oak in the country, and a pair of London Planes (at Bryanston) are some of our tallest broadleaf trees. The Martyrs Tree at Tolpuddle has special and well-known status in British history, some were alive during the arrival of the Normans, a few more when the first Queen Elizabeth came to the throne. Others including the Remedy Oak at Cranborne are the subject of folk tales. The Posy Tree at Mapperton stood sentinel to the bodies of plague victims carried past it to be buried in communal grave.

The trees still standing owe their survival to their importance in the landscape: as boundary and burial markers, as meeting places, to ceremonial plantings, as working trees supplying food, fuel, building materials, fruit and fodder as well as shelter. Sadly, and inevitably, there have been losses even since the book was published twenty years ago.

Page 100 features the village's own Gossip Tree which succumbed to Dutch elm disease and the drought of 1976. Some residents might remember that "There was thought to be a curse attached to the original tree which stated that whoever took part in the tree's destruction would soon have bad luck". Which is what might have caused Frank Hawkins who took part in the felling, to be under the wheel of the church tenor bell shortly after he helped the old elm on its way. The bell shattered above his head mid peal. The text doesn't discuss the extent of his injuries but there is a winter photograph of the current Gossip Tree, a lime, looking twenty years younger than it does today.

Are there any records of artefacts made from the gossip elm?



Compost Corner

Recently, I was given a very old recipe book called, '365 Luncheon Dishes'. Aha! I thought, no longer will I have lunchtime menu conundrums, day by day I will simply follow the book's recommendations. So very randomly I opened a page in July and for the 5th the suggestion was, 'Calf's brains on Toast', perfect summer fare, or for something a little lighter, on 27th July there was 'Lettuce Sandwiches', literally lettuce, mayonnaise and not surprisingly, bread.

These days we are a little more adventurous and if you're a vegetable grower you'll have no problem creating something delicious. Courgettes are one of the most versatile of vegetables: they make a fantastic soup if paired with some basil, parsley and cream; grate them to make fritters; try them barbecued or grilled - so easy and low in calories too.

Back to my book...I can't wait to see in the new year with 'Stewed Breast of Lamb' in short, boil lamb, cover in gravy and garnish with peas. Sounds truly memorable.

Alison Main



Village weather for May 2022

A mixed month with frequent small amounts of rain and some good sunny days. Relatively warm.

15 rain days, 2 days thunder, 3 ground frost, no air frost and no gales.

Comp. Figures	2022	2021
Rain (Most 10.1mm on 23rd)	41.9mm	98.5mm
Sunshine Avg. 6.2 hrs	190 hours	172.3 hours
Max mean temp. (highest 22.1°C on 17th)	17.9°C	14.9°C
Min mean temp. (lowest 3.1°C on 3rd)	7.8°C	5.1°C

This July issue of The Gossip Tree was edited by: **Graham Eames.**

We apologise in advance if we have made any errors or omissions

Please would regular contributors for the July issue contact me via email:

(fmgossiptree@gmail.com)

Alternatively, contact the **Chairman, Barbara Humphreys**, email: **blueletterbox@btinternet.com** for further information.

Submissions for the August issue by Thursday 21st July please.

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